

**WASHINGTON COUNTY  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING  
Stillwater Government Center  
Stillwater, MN  
June 17, 2009**

**WIB Members and Partners Present**

Nigel Bath	Lori Brink	Brenda Carlson
Marie Gadway	Jeralyn Jargo	Jane Klein
Kim Luchsinger	Cherylee Sherry	Patrick Singel
Jeanine Swanson	Corrine Watson	Russell Williams

**Workforce Center Staff Present**

Nina Arneson	Robert Crawford	Carrie Gatzke
Beth Jameston	Rachel O'Connell	

**Guests**

Freeman Beasley, Employment Counselor  
Ona Pradham, Trainer  
Washington County Workforce Center

**WIB Members and Partners Not Present**

Jim Finley	Duane Gatzke	Stacy Kennedy
Peg Killen	Ernie Pines	Lowell Reiks, Jr.
Dave Schaps	Janelle Schmitz	David Videen

**1. Call to Order and Introductions – Brenda Carlson, Chair**

Brenda Carlson called the meeting to order and members and guests introduced themselves.

**2. Adopt Agenda – Brenda Carlson**

A Motion was made to adopt the Agenda, it was seconded, and the Motion carried.

**3. Approve May 2009 minutes – Brenda Carlson**

A Motion was made to adopt the May minutes, it was seconded, and the Motion carried.

**4. Committee Reports**

**Business and Marketing – Marie Gadway:** The Committee discussed the Job Fair and how some companies are using FaceBook and Twitter to manage resumes. They discussed how the Workforce Center could screen people before sending them out to a company. Robert added there weren't enough businesses with job openings to hold the Job Fair, but they may reschedule for later in the year depending on the economy. Northwest will lay off an additional 700 to 1,000 people before the end of the year. Jane asked if there are resources for people over 50 to start their own businesses. Robert said Brenda teaches a class for the Workforce Center on Entrepreneurship and people are referred to resources through Project GATE. Brenda said she also holds classes in North St. Paul and St. Cloud and class numbers

were over 20. Jane thought entrepreneurs will be hiring in 5-10 years and will pull Minnesota out of the recession.

**Youth Committee – Cherylee Sherry:** Carrie gave an update on the Youth Program for the Committee. Tree Trust crews started working at county parks and reserves and an additional 40 youth were working at scattered sites. State monitors will visit sites at the end of July, interviewing people and looking at records.

A possible project for the Committee is to offer career exploration, financial literacy and other classes as a summer program for youth. Board members offered a number of ideas for the youth project: coordinate with the Fast Trac program which is working with Stillwater, Forest Lake, and South Washington County School Districts; ask financial institutions to help teach classes on money management; teach through entertainment such as in the TV special “UN-BROKE: What you Need to Know About Money”; have an event offering free food to attract youth; and use other youth as mentors to get kids involved. Brenda asked for an action step and it was decided Cherylee will arrange a meeting with Stacy and Jeanine to continue the project.

**Policy and Law – Pat Singel:** Jane said the Committee talked about the Governor’s budget cuts. They also talked about entrepreneurs and the need to collaborate and bring resources in a different fashion. Pat said the county hasn’t had time to do a complete analysis of the budget. They were prepared for cuts to county aid but other cuts were a surprise – the biggest cut was to children’s services and funds to help people with utility bills.

##### **5. Workforce Center Workshops Update – Ona Pradhan, Trainer**

The Workforce Center is offering more extensive workshops for all skill levels. Transition is the first workshop people take – whether they have been laid off, fired, retired, or looking for a career change – they need to gain a new perspective and overcome negativity, looking at this change as an opportunity. Empowerment helps people see feel more confident by using affirmation, visualization and goal setting. Many workers, both young and older, have very limited technology skills. In Technology class, people learn basic Microsoft Word and internet instruction, and how to set up an e-mail account and use it professionally. Throughout these classes people are encouraged to think about their professional identity and to take control of it.

Career Exploration is a 3-day seminar with assessments and values inventories to help people channel what they want to do. In this job market, this is the time to get re-trained. Education Exploration instructs people on how to prepare for school and pay for it.

During Job Search Preparation 1, 2, and 3, they do an extensive skill, need and value assessment because the average worker has between 500-800 skills. People identify their skills and how to sell themselves professionally. Job seekers must be proactive because employers advertise only 20% of openings. The Resume Foundation and Lab classes teach how to create accomplishment stories from past work history, illustrating how you’ll bring value to the organization. Using the job-match summary, job seekers show how they’ll meet what the employer is looking for. Employers don’t have the money to make the wrong decision in hiring and training.

Cherylee asked about software that searches on-line resumes for certain words and if your resume doesn't match, you can be eliminated. Ona said not every employer does that, but it's good to use the key terminology of the job and do company research to distinguish yourself from other applicants. Jeanine said most companies are going electronic and they don't have the time to meet people in person. Ona said they encourage people to network by going to networking groups and not rely solely on the internet to find jobs.

Marketing Tools covers how to create mini-resumes, portfolios and other materials to leave behind at an interview. Electronic Networking is about having a positive internet presence and how to use Linked-in. First Impressions examines your professional image such as voice, body language, diction, and how to interview on the telephone. Interview workshops help job seekers prepare by giving sample questions and the opportunity to do taped, mock interviews that are evaluated. The final class is Workplace Success, how to approach employers about reviews, get promoted and handling difficult scenarios. Stand alone workshops include: Financial Literacy, Age as an Advantage, Exploring Self Employment and, in the future, Job Talk. Less than 5% of people on unemployment take job search classes. As trainers, they try to evolve with the market to create effective curriculum by listening to employers and relaying what they are looking for.

Questions: *Do you mention volunteerism as a way of networking?* Yes, through volunteering, people can network with others in their field. If they are hired within the organization, it saves the employer hiring and training expenses. *Are workshops only for those who are unemployed?* Workshops are open to anyone who can benefit from them. *Do other counties have similar workshops?* Customers prefer our workshops and some drive a long distance to attend. Brenda added she speaks at other counties and Washington County's workshops are far above the others. *Do you work with the Department of Rehabilitative Services?* Yes, Ona said they will make accommodations for anyone with a disability if they know in advance.

## **6. Dislocated Worker Program Update – Freeman Beasley**

In the Dislocated Worker program, numbers began to jump about 17 months ago and now caseloads are over 100. Nationally, 80% of people laid off are male, many middle aged. Freeman said he sees many men who have worked in male oriented fields such as manufacturing, assembly or construction who can be somewhat juvenile in their outlook because they've never had to grow and develop. The day is gone when you apply for a job and work until you retire. There's a tendency with this population to be very ironic; the world has changed and they're not ready and are resistant to change.

When we talk about finances, many middle aged men with a high school diploma were making \$85-100,000 in a factory or construction job, but are already leveraged to the hilt financially. Many have become "TV lazy" and haven't read more than a magazine for 20 years. Our readiness checklist reveals learning disabilities or a reading level at the second or third grade and they can't compete in this marketplace.

The people Freeman is closing to employment have a certificate or degree. Someone can be a machinist for 25 years and be able to do the job, but they need the CNC certificate because

employers can demand whatever they want in this market. They need to go back to school and upgrade their skills and are told to research schools. Some people see private schools advertised on TV and sign a contract charging \$30,000 for training that would be much less with a state college or university.

People over 50 are having a very difficult time getting back in with a large company and some are dealing with health problems. Becoming certified as a project manager can lead to high paying opportunities; one customer was making \$70 an hour on two projects. Contract employment is an option to get into a company and demonstrate you're worth hiring as a permanent employee.

Dislocated Worker counselors aren't there to find people a job but to prepare people for the job market by teaching them how to market themselves. Freeman encouraged everyone to spend some time at the Workforce Center and sit in on a class. It will take time to turn the economy around, but our parents and grandparents survived, and we will too. People need to be proactive, take the chip off their shoulder, and everyday – read.

**7. Election of Chair and Vice Chair – Robert Crawford**

Brenda Carlson was nominated and elected as chair for next year. Nigel Bath was elected Vice Chair representing the private sector and Jeralyn Jargo will be Vice Chair representing the public sector.

**8. Business Services Update – Beth Jameston**

Beth compiled contacts for the job fair from other area job fairs, Minnesota Works and chambers of commerce and will use this list in the future. She will contact the businesses that had job openings to be Business of the Day at the Workforce Center.

**9. Recognition of retiring WIB members – Robert Crawford**

Jeanine Swanson received a Service Award from the Washington County Commissioners for reaching her 6 year term limit on the WIB. Jeanine was a past chair of the WIB and will continue serving on the Youth Committee. David Videen has reached his term limit and his award will be sent to him. Marie Gadway received an award for her service as she is stepping down as a member.

**10. Announcements**

Corrine said United Way is bringing a Fare for All Express food program to Stillwater which will be located at Oak Park Schools in September. Fare for All distributes quality boxes of food for about half price to anyone who is in need.

**11. Adjourn – Brenda Carlson**

A Motion was made to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded, and the Motion carried.